

Administrative:
635 Main Street
Middletown, CT 06457
860.347.6971

Locations:

CHC of Bristol
395 North Main Street
Bristol, CT 06010
860.585.5000

CHC of Clinton
114 East Main Street
Clinton, CT 06413
860.664.0787

CHC of Danbury
8 Delay Street
Danbury, CT 06810
203.797.8330

CHC of Enfield
5 North Main Street
Enfield, CT 06082
860.253.9024

CHC of Groton
481 Gold Star Highway
Groton, CT 06340
860.446.8858

CHC of Meriden
134 State Street
Meriden, CT 06450
203.237.2229

CHC of Middletown
675 Main Street
Middletown, CT 06457
860.347.6971

CHC of New Britain
85 Lafayette Street
New Britain, CT 06051
860.224.3642

CHC of New London
One Shaw's Cove
New London, CT 06320
860.447.8304

CHC of Old Saybrook
263 Main Street
Old Saybrook, CT 06475
860.388.4433

CHC of Waterbury
51 North Elm Street
Waterbury, CT 06702
203.574.4000

Day Street CHC
49 Day Street
Norwalk, CT 06854
203.854.9292

Franklin Street CHC
141 Franklin Street
Stamford, CT 06901
203.969.0802

www.chc1.com

Facebook/CHCInc
Twitter(@CHCConnecticut)

January 29, 2015



Re: Senate Bill 209, An Act Concerning Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program

I am Robert Dudley, MD, MEd, a general pediatrician in New Britain and Community Health Center, Inc.'s Medical Director for School Based Health Services. I am writing today to lend my support to Senate Bill 209, An Act Concerning Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program.

As a pediatrician, I view low literacy as a health problem. Like the approach to other health problems, the best strategy to deal with illiteracy is prevention. Reach Out and Read is a national program to promote literacy by integrating early literacy activities into well child visits. Reach Out and Read gives doctors an evidence-based strategy to promote child development and learning.

Research documents that children served by the Reach Out and Read program show an increase of 4-8 points on vocabulary tests by the age of 2. For a two-year-old, this increase represents an approximately six-month gain, developmentally-speaking, preventing the "falling behind" routinely observed and measured in children living in low-income families.

Families love the opportunity to access books for their children, and children in our practice now routinely ask for books instead of stickers. The few minutes it takes to demonstrate how to engage a child with a book pays off in so many ways- from teaching positive parenting techniques to discussing normal child development. That many of the books are bilingual (Polish, Spanish and Arabic in our office) gives parents an important learning resource that they can't easily access elsewhere.

In New Britain we have seen through the Discovery Collaborative the importance of early literacy activities in achieving educational goals by the third grade and the positive effects of educational success on health. Reach Out and Read offers an important 'bridge' between the medical and educational words, allowing literacy messages to be delivered before children have entered preschool, as well as reinforcement of those messages through preschool and kindergarten. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Dudley, MD, MEd, FAAP



Serving underserved and uninsured patients at Connecticut's largest network of community health centers.